

## Tips for Working with Your

# Local Official

### Get a Radon Proclamation in Your Area

An official proclamation can be used to attract media attention when the governor, mayor, or other state or local official endorses observance of National Radon Action Month. Here are some tips for working with your local official to sign and promote a radon proclamation in your area:

- ▶ Contact your mayor's or governor's office to determine how the official issues proclamations and identify the appropriate contact person. You may learn that the process takes a few months or that the official has a specific proclamation schedule. Be sure to call a few months in advance so that you can get your proclamation on the schedule in January.
- ▶ Contact your state radon program office to find out if they have already requested a proclamation. If the state has already coordinated a governor's proclamation, you can leverage it to encourage your local officials to do the same.
- ▶ Write a proclamation for your local official. You can use the sample template on page 24. Include information about radon, local statistics, and other community activities during National Radon Action Month.
- ▶ Send a proclamation request letter to the appropriate person in the official's office along with the proclamation. Use the request letter template provided on page 28 to get started on your letter.
- ▶ Follow-up with the official's office after sending your letter. You may need to call a few times to check on the status of your proclamation request.
- ▶ Coordinate a proclamation signing ceremony with your government official and invite the public and stakeholders such as local health programs and community activists.
- ▶ Use the proclamation to attract media coverage during National Radon Action Month. Issue a press release to get media attention for the proclamation and invite the media to the proclamation signing ceremony or other related events.
- ▶ Get permission from your official's office to post the proclamation in public places such as bulletin boards in local schools, hardware stores, real estate offices, and other relevant venues where you can attract attention for radon issues during January.

### Kansas Leverages Governor's Proclamation

When Governor Kathleen Sebelius declared January as Radon Action Month in Kansas, her message became the centerpiece of a comprehensive radon outreach campaign sponsored by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (DHE). The public response to the promotion was dramatic. Test kit sales doubled during that time.

Advanced planning was the key to the state's successful program, said Kim Steves of the Kansas DHE. She began collaborating with her state's Public Information Office in November 2006 to secure the participation of the governor. On January 22, 2007, Governor Sebelius signed the proclamation during a special ceremony attended by the media and local partners from Kansas State University, Kansas County Extension services, and several health and environmental organizations.

"A proclamation," said Steves, "is just one component of a successful campaign for National Radon Action Month." DHE and local partners used a media campaign to reinforce the governor's message. They issued press releases and purchased air time to run EPA's television, radio, and print PSAs, customized with their state's contact information. Media coverage included a local interview with Steves on KSNT Channel 27 during the noon news hour as well as several radio interviews. Steves said that, "The proclamation can be a foundation for local media coverage and adds credibility to your radon message."



**Kansas Radon Proclamation Signing Ceremony (pictured from left to right):** Brian Hanson, Kansas State University; Robert Dye, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Clark Duffy, KDHE Bureau of Air and Radiation; Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius; Mike Heideman, KDHE Public Information; Kim Steves, KDHE Bureau of Air and Radiation; Cindy Evans, Shawnee County Extension; and Tom Conley, KDHE Bureau of Air and Radiation.

Sample

# Letter

## to Government Official

[Date]

[Honorific (i.e. "The Honorable") and full name of official]  
[Title of official]  
[Address of official]

Dear [Honorific and name]:

I am writing to request that you proclaim the month of January as Radon Action Month in [county/city/town and/or state]. Your proclamation would be in conjunction with other cities and states around the country who, in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, are taking the lead in observing National Radon Action Month.

In [area], radon is present at elevated levels in about [X]% of homes (information available from your state radon office).

One in 15 homes across the United States has elevated radon levels. With more than 20,000 deaths each year, radon exposure is the second leading cause of lung cancer deaths in the United States and the number one cause among non-smokers. In light of these concerns, the EPA has designated January as National Radon Action Month. During National Radon Action Month, [organization name], in conjunction with EPA, will strengthen our efforts to educate the public about the dangers of radon and what can be done to minimize the health risk from exposure to elevated levels of indoor radon. As part of our education efforts we will: [insert activities].

I have enclosed a fact sheet that will give you more information about the dangers of exposure to indoor radon. I have also taken the liberty of drafting a sample proclamation for your consideration. We would be truly honored to have your support. Please contact me if you require any additional information. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

[Your name]  
[Title]  
[Phone number and/or email address]

Sample

# Proclamation

by Government Official

YOUR CITY, COUNTY, OR STATE



YOUR GOVERNMENTAL OFFICE

## [County Executive's, Mayor's, Governor's] Proclamation In Support of Radon Action Month in [County, City, and/or State]

WHEREAS, radon is a colorless, odorless, naturally occurring radioactive gas that threatens the health of our citizens;

WHEREAS, radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer deaths in the United States and the number one cause among non-smokers;

WHEREAS, one in 15 homes across the U.S. has an elevated radon level;

WHEREAS, any home in **[community]** may have an elevated level of radon, even if other homes in the same neighborhood do not;

WHEREAS, testing for radon is simple and inexpensive;

WHEREAS, identified radon problems can be fixed;

WHEREAS, **[your organization]** and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are supporting efforts to encourage Americans to test their homes for radon, mitigate elevated levels of radon, and build new homes with radon-resistant materials and features.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, **[name]**, **[title]** of **[county, city, and/or state]** do hereby proclaim:

JANUARY **[Dates]**, **[Year]**  
Official Radon Action Month  
In **[County, City, and/or State]**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this **[date]** day of **[month]**, in the year **[year]**.

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(Signature of Official)